

From: [Avi Tiomkin <ATiomkin@atglobalcap.com>](mailto:ATiomkin@atglobalcap.com)

To: [ehbarak <ehbarak1@gmail.com>](mailto:ehbarak1@gmail.com)

CC: [nili Priell <nilipr@013net.net>](mailto:nilipr@013net.net)
[Avi Tiomkin <ATiomkin@atglobalcap.com>](mailto:ATiomkin@atglobalcap.com)

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U.S. Moves Stealth Fighters to South Korea

By JULIAN E. BARNES

WASHINGTON-U.S. F-22 stealth fighter jets arrived in South Korea on Sunday for joint exercises, U.S. defense officials said, the latest demonstration of advanced military capabilities meant to deter provocations from Pyongyang.

The arrival of the F-22s came after previous displays of U.S. air power that included B-52 bombers and B-2 stealth bombers. The F-22s are ordinarily stationed in Japan at Kadena air force base, but flew to Osan Air Base in South Korea for the continuing exercises.

How far did B-2 stealth bombers travel for a "practice run" in South Korea? Why is North Korea threatening missile strikes against U.S. cities like Austin, Texas? WSJ's Jason Bellini has the Short Answer.

F-22 fighters, among the most expensive and advanced weapons in the U.S. Air Force arsenal, are capable of evading radar and air-defense systems.

U.S. defense officials had pledged further demonstrations of American military capability in the face of continuing threats from North Korea to attack the U.S., South Korea and allies in the Pacific.

The annual military exercises with South Korea have angered North Korea, particularly as the U.S. has put its most advanced capabilities on display. The B-2 stealth bomber flights over South Korea were a demonstration of the U.S. ability to deliver nuclear weapons from bases in the United States.

Senior North Korean leaders are meeting this week, and U.S. officials are watching closely to see whether the North continues its threats.

The Pentagon has been following a strategy based on a belief that muscular shows of military strength are necessary to deter North Korea from further military provocations.

Some officials have voiced reservations about such displays, arguing they risk further escalating the situation. But the South Korean government, U.S. officials have said, has asked for demonstrations of America's nuclear deterrence.

The current U.S.-South Korean exercises are scheduled to continue for several more weeks.

Write to Julian E. Barnes at julian.barnes@wsj.com